

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 17758 291103Z
ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 17758

DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR DR. PRESS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TGEN, UR, US
SUBJECT: US-USSR S&T AGREEMENT: KIRILLIN LETTER TO PRESS
ON S&T JCM CANCELLATION

REF: STATE 177651

1. ON JULY 28 AYKAZYAN GAVE EMBOFF A COPY OF A LETTER
(DATED JULY 24) FROM KIRILLIN TO PRESIDENTIAL SCIENCE
ADVISOR FRANK PRESS, WHICH REPLIES TO THE PRESS-KIRILLIN
LETTER ON THE S&T JCM CANCELLATION IN REFTEL. AYKAZYAN
STATED THAT THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON GAVE THE
LETTER TO PRESS "TWO OR THREE DAYS AGO". FOR DEPT
INFORMATION WE ARE SENDING INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION
IN PARA 2 BELOW. AYKAZYAN STRESSED SOVIET DESIRE
TO CONTINUE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL S&T COOPERATION;
HOWEVER, HE INDICATED THAT SOVIETS CONSIDER IT IS UP
TO US TO PROPOSE NEW DATES FOR POSSIBLE RESCHEDULING OF
S&T JCM.

2. DEAR DR. PRESS:
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I CONFIRM THE RECEIPT OF YOUR LETTER OF JULY 13, IN
WHICH IT WAS STATED THAT THE AMERICAN SIDE, BY
DECISION OF PRESIDENT CARTER, CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY
TO POSTPONE THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE SOVIET-AMERICAN
JOINT COMMISSION ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION,
WHICH ACCORDING TO OUR AGREEMENT WITH YOU, SHOULD HAVE

OCCURRED JULY 17-19 IN MOSCOW.

THE ONE-SIDED CANCELLATION BY YOU OF THE SESSION OF THE COMMISSION, PLANNED FOR JULY 17-19, DAMAGES SOVIET-AMERICAN SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL TIES. THE MOTIVES INDICATED IN YOUR LETTER FOR THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE TIME FOR THE SESSION CANNOT BE ACCEPTED BY US AND WE CONSIDER THEM AS UNACCEPTABLE INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION.

OUR POSITION ABOUT THE USEFULNESS OF MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES REMAINS UNCHANGED.

SINCERELY, V. KIRILLIN.

3. JULY 27 IZVESTIYA HAS SHORT TASS ITEM (CARRIED BY TASS ENGLISH SERVICE JULY 26), WHICH RESTATES MOST OF THE POINTS IN THE KIRILLIN-PRESS LETTER. IZVESTIYA STORY IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE CANCELLATION OF THE S&T JCM OR ANY OTHER RECENT VISIT CANCELLATIONS HAVE BEEN MENTIONED IN THE SOVIET PRESS.

4. COMMENT: KIRILLIN'S MENTION OF DAMAGE TO US-SOVIET S&T COOPERATION IS VAGUE, AND WE DOUBT THAT SOVIETS WILL BE INCLINED TO BACK IT UP IN ANY CONCRETE FASHION.
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KIRILLIN LETTER AND IZVESTIYA ARTICLE REPRESENT MINIMUM RESPONSE SOVIETS COULD BE EXPECTED TO MAKE TO PRESS VISIT CANCELLATION. DURING MEETING WITH EMBOFF AYKAZYAN COMMENTED APPROVINGLY THAT WORKING LEVEL CONTACTS IN THE BILATERALS ARE PROCEEDING, NOTING SPECIFICALLY THE RECENT VISIT OF "COMPUTER APPLICATIONS" COORDINATOR AUFENKAMP. (FURTHER INDICATION OF SOVIET EAGERNESS TO CONTINUE S&T COOPERATION IS PROVIDED BY AYKAZYAN'S PROPOSAL THAT BOTH COUNTRIES PREPARE DETAILED, CONCRETELY REALIZABLE PROPOSALS FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS OF COOPERATIVE ACTIVITY UNDER THE TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT, WHICH IS REPORTED IN MORE DETAIL SEPTEL.) EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT DECISION ON POSSIBLE RESCHEDULING OF S&T JCM AWAIT COMPLETION OF ON-GOING REVIEW OF EXCHANGES AND IMPROVEMENT IN CLIMATE OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS.

5. SEPTEL FOLLOWS WITH EMBASSY RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADDITIONAL MEASURES THE US MIGHT TAKE AS PART OF CONTINUING REVIEW OF THE S&T BILATERALS. TOON

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